

"Open All Night"



## Contributors

### Poetry

Tim Baker, Bryan Brown, John L. Ford, Greg Hoover, Mike L. Mallory, Thomas Arthur Shaffer, Curtis J. Steere, Martel Edward Tignor, Christina Watkins

### Short Fiction

T. Rob Brown  
Tom Haase  
Michael Penn Lee Herndon  
Mike L. Mallory

### Photography

Mark Ancell  
Nick Coble  
Chris Cox

### Artwork

Charles Stephens

### Book Reviews

Jimmy L. Sexton

### Music Reviews

Christopher A. Clark  
John L. Ford  
Mike L. Mallory

### Video Reviews

Jimmy L. Sexton

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# AVALON

is

Missouri Southern's  
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Literary Magazine

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## Editor

John L. Ford

## Assistant Editors

Mike L. Mallory

Jimmy L. Sexon

## Contributing Editor

Christopher A. Clark

## Editorial Assistants

Bryan Brown

T. Rob Brown

Alison Laub

Christina Watkins

## Illustrator

Curtis Steere

## Adviser

Chad D. Stebbins

*Avalon*, as a supplement of *The Chart*, is published by Missouri Southern State College's communications department. It serves as a laboratory experience to its staff and a forum for writers, artists, and photographers at Missouri Southern.

Persons wanting to submit material may do so by dropping it by *The Chart* office, Room 117, Heazles Hall.

*Avalon* will only publish submissions from students, faculty members, and staff members at Missouri Southern. Also accepted may be submissions from Missouri Southern alumni—on a limited basis.

Artwork and photographs submitted must be ready for publication. Size alterations may be made on such pieces in order to make the material fit within *Avalon*'s pages. Literary material submitted must be in a legible format (typewritten is preferred).

Error-ridden literature submissions may be returned to the author for correction prior to publication. *Avalon* makes it its policy to correct typographical and grammatical errors within literature submissions.

*Avalon* claims one-time publication rights to work appearing in its pages.

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# Ramble On

Recently, I had the opportunity to be a part of *The Chart*'s contingent of staff which traveled to New Orleans to participate in the annual Associated Collegiate Press convention.

We have all heard that New Orleans is "Sin City, U.S.A.," and to some extent that is true. However, the town should be more reknown for its focus on the arts.

While in the city by the river, I was privileged to walk into a small photographic gallery whose name I have lost to the passage of time and several Hurricanes (not Hugo, but a particularly wicked local beverage). Once in the three-story building, I was taken aback by the quality of the prints, as well as the reputations of those who had works displayed there.

Annie Leibowitz, a photographer with *Rolling Stone* magazine, had many of her unique artistic works displayed there. Leibowitz's concentration, of course, is on modern musical celebrities. I saw everyone's photograph in there, from Bruce Springsteen to Annie Lennox of the Eurythmics, to Madonna.

But what really knocked my socks off was the prints by Ancell. Not *Chart* staffer Mark Ancell, although he is good, but by the late Ancell Adams, a respected wildlife photographer who was best known for his scenes of Yosemite National Park. There was one print of a large mountain which I stared at for about a half-hour. Words cannot convey the quality of the print; the only way I know to convey it is go to New Orleans, walk down Decatur Street in the French Quarter, find the shop, and

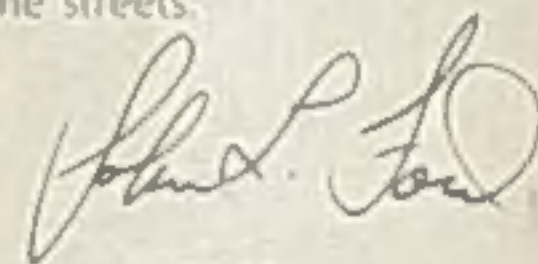
view it for yourself. The detail was astounding; it looked like a painting in black and white rather than a photograph.

Another thing New Orleans is noted for is music. During a one block section of Bourbon Street we heard more music than I've heard in my life in southwest Missouri. In this section I heard a rendition of *Black Sabbath*'s "Paranoid," *The Doors* "People Are Strange" as well as numerous jazz, blues, country, mo-town, and zydeco bands. Zydeco is a form of traditional Cajun music born in the bayous of southern Louisiana.

Jazz is probably the largest musical form down there. Numerous record shops have formed their entire inventory around jazz music, particularly the works of Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday. I was in heaven, and would have spent my entire allowance for the trip in the record stores, had it not been for the friends who had better foresight than myself. My friends pulled me out of the record stores and into the clubs.

The clubs were amazing in themselves. Preservation Hall had five Dixieland jazz bands playing nightly, and one could listen to all of them if they paid a \$5 cover charge. Pappa Joe's Music Bar featured the Motown sound on the night we were there. Rhythm and blues seem to be enjoying a resurgence in popularity down there, particularly the works of Aretha Franklin.

Down on the French Market during the day, one can watch any number of street musicians and artists. One Dixieland jazz band featured a small boy who looked to be about ten as their lead trumpet player. The kid really had them dancing in the streets.



# The New Track

*Avalon* will still be known as Missouri Southern's art and literature magazine, but the staff has decided to follow through with a few changes.

Since its birth in 1985, *Avalon* has shown off its poetry, fiction, photography, and hand-painted drawings, with little recognition devoted to entertainment. It is through your support and understanding that these changes have been made possible. Beginning with this issue, *Avalon* will make a concentrated effort to delve into the entertainment world and come out with several new and hopefully interesting pieces in hopes of attracting, exciting, and keeping a larger audience.

The magazine has consistently held the policy that it will print all submissions, providing there is space. This still holds true, and *Avalon* will still feature short stories, poetry, fiction, and photography. However, the new and improved emphasis of the magazine is entertainment.

The *Avalon* editors have often been barraged with questions about reviews, concerts, and movies. After much thought and debate over the past two semesters, the *Avalon* staff has decided to go with the change, and the time is now. The first step in the change began early this semester when the *The Chart* editors decided to devote the newspaper's arts page entirely to events happening within the music, art, and theatre departments. Before, the arts page had often featured book, movie, music, and restaurant reviews. Now, those same reviews will grace the pages of *Avalon*.

While not all of the planned changes can happen at

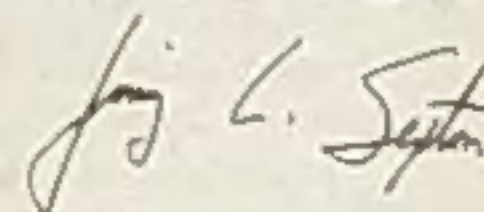
once, this issue is representative of those now being undertaken. The *Avalon* staff has in mind several new and challenging ideas, some of which are in this issue. In addition to reviews of books, movies, and music, *Avalon* has added a video section. This is a listing of new releases, complete with rating and a detailed account of the movie, which are hot on the market.

Also along the viewing lines is a television section, designed to let the reader know the various events happening on the tube and what to watch, and what not to watch.

Our plans further call for paperback book listings, movie listings, concert reviews, and in-depth interviews with authors and musicians. However, the staff must be careful not to shoot its full wad just yet because we want some additions to be a surprise.

In addition to the two afore-mentioned new sections, various design changes will be made which will round out our changing look of *Avalon*. Over the course of the spring semester, *Avalon* hopes to complete its changes and additions and will be prepared for an exciting and fresh new academic year in the Fall 1990.

The *Avalon* staff realizes that these changes and additions come as a surprise to many of its readers and we hope you will continue to follow our pages with excitement. These changes have been implemented for you, the reader, and we hope you will enjoy reading them as much as we enjoy reporting them. Once again, thanks for your support.



# Cover Art by Alison Laub



## ANIMALLIAN

short fiction by T. Rob Brown



**T**he woods surrounded him; they pulled him in and closed him off, both mind and body were caught without escape. But he paid no attention as his mind was wandering like it often did. He never liked thinking about the present; it was too depressing.

Zeak had been hunting several hours for ducks, and shot down a fairly good-sized mallard. His dog bounded off after the fallen carcass, and that idiot dog hadn't come back yet. "Where could he be?" Zeak searched frantically through bushes, briars, behind trees, over rocks, but Spot could not be spotted. After many long and hard hours of searching for "man's best friend," night was falling and Zeak gave up that search to look for his Chevy pickup which was parked by the pond where he had shot the mallard. Soon he was frantically searching for his truck. "This is ridiculous!" Zeak exclaimed, as his nerves buckled and blazed in rage. But for once, his mind was actually thinking about what was happening, but to no avail; he still couldn't think straight. He began running faster and more quickly through the woods, searching and seeking, but never finding. While running through the many trees of the forest, he tripped and fell, and fell, and fell, and just kept on falling, but never hitting the ground...

"Brrrrrrrring..." screamed the small, bright red

telephone setting on the nightstand next to Zeak Zelk's bed. He jumped out of his bed like a bolt of lightning, or a bat out of... "Brrrrrrrring..." "Oh, my aching head. Whew!" Zeak sighed in relief after realizing that it was just another nightmare about his coming-of-age. "I wish I could stop dreaming about that strange night," he thought. Zeak reached over and plucked the telephone from its pedestal... "Hello?" He adjusted the receiver so that he could listen better. "Yes, this is Animallian speaking," Zeak replied. He paused for a moment, listening intently to what he was being told. "You had better be right, or I'll deal with you personally," he stated before he hung up the phone with a "Zounds!"

He jumped over the bed, ran toward the wall facing the foot of his bed, and thrust the full force of his body against it. "Click," it said, and groaned as a small panel slid open, exposing a set of numbered buttons. He typed in a code and another panel slid open next to this first one, only larger. The first panel slid shut. Zeak reached his right arm into the new hole and pulled out a piece of cloth which was mostly black, but there were some traces of white on it.

Zeak put the clothes on quickly, an outfit that totally covered his body. The mostly black costume had a white section of material on the

mask which covered his eyes, and there was a white eagle that appeared to flap its wings as the muscles rippled and flexed on his muscular chest. First sight of this weird pajama-type outfit might cause the average person to wonder if Zeak was either a nut or a vigilante.

Zeak pressed in another code on the panel which had concealed his outfit. It slid shut as the whole wall began to turn. The wall turned a full 90 degrees and he walked on through this new opening into a secret room. Then he jumped up onto a sooped-up motorcycle, kicked back the kick-stand, revved up the engine, and pressed a small button on the handlebar. This caused a garage-door-opener type of effect which opened a wall in front of him, and closed the wall which he had just previously exited. He rode out of the secret room into a forest clearing and pressed another button on the handlebar, closing the wall through which he exited, which re-enclosed the house. He sped off, zoomed around a mass of moss, plummeted up a steep slope, and drove down the nearby highway.

All Zeak had to do was press the "hydro-fuel propulsion button," which was located on the op-

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## Animallian from page 3

posite handlebar to the one with the "garage-door openers," and then he could sit back and relax; it would be easy street from here-on-out. This button started up the new maxum-engine, which he and his friend Max had created. To elucidate, it was an internal separation engine that used a new chemical formula called hydro-fuel instead of gasoline. This new formula could run his bike for a month or more per gallon. Plus, by "internal separation," the cycle separated the oxygen atoms from the hydrogen atoms, releasing only refreshing oxygen into the air. It took him and Max nearly two months to build the new engine. The formula was an accidental find by Zeak, who discovered it during a lab in his college chemistry class. Max was the only human Zeak had dared tell his alias to, because Max was the only true friend he had ever had.

In a few moments, he was at the Californian beach where the call had come from. He found the reason for the distress call he had received earlier on the small, bright red telephone at home. It was his worst nightmare, next to the continuing one he had last night. His arch-rival, his *contra*, the most evil thing of all, had somehow escaped the clutches of death! "Can life possibly get any worse?" thought Zeak, alias Animallian. "Eureka!" he exclaimed, "I've got it! I'll use the retro-rockets on my bike (powered by a single, sparkling drop of Hydro-fuel), and the two mini-sparrow missiles that I carry for just such an emergency!"

Then, without a second thought, Animallian fired the two sparrow missiles and the two retro-rockets...

The villain being fired at was A.C.E., otherwise known as Animallian Contra-Extreme. A.C.E. was a master of transitional powers, the atoms and molecules in his body constantly changed and reformed into a new being. A.C.E. was also the head-honcho of several intergalactic gangs. The last time he had faced Animallian, he died, but here he was; alive again and ready to counterattack.

Animallian too had traveled to the outer limits of the galaxy on many quests to capture his arch-villain, but Animallian was not from a far away galaxy, or even another planet. Animallian was from Earth, so that was where the majority of his adventures took place.

"I've had it up to here with this guy," Animallian thought, while he imagined his hand, with palm downward, measuring from his head to the outer limits of the universe. He quickly jumped off the bike as the four missiles flew to their destination... But to no avail! A.C.E. simply used his transitional powers to change from the normal carbon-based form of life to that of pure oxygen. This form allowed the missiles to fly straight through him without harm. The vigilante was ready to fire the extremely small sidewinder missiles, but thought better of it. He wasn't quick enough, though; his *contra* fired first! Animallian tensed his skin as tight as an "armadillo," and the ray bounced off.

He was warmed up, but not for this. This

wasn't a cream puff he was fighting. It was a master-criminal, an artist of condensation and also transmutation, not to mention his famous transition mastery. Animallian appeared to be swinging his fist, but as he swung his fist, he spread apart his fingers; as his hand left his enemy's arm, a tremendous gash could be seen. Animallian had used his cunningly hidden "fingernail-claws." These fingernails were retractable and were extremely sharp on the sides. They were just like the claws that are found on "cats," "bears," and "wolverines." But it was a waste of time (and effort); minor cuts could never destroy a master of transition, not even major ones. He simply healed himself by rebuilding his molecules.

This time Animallian Contra Extreme was ready to anilate Animallian at the speed of light, for he had changed his molecules to those of pure light! Animallian had a head start and jumped back in the nick-of-time. Even with "cheetah" blood in his veins, it was hard to outrun light. A.C.E. transformed into his normal appearance, which wasn't a joyous sight! He was unlike a human, but yet like a human; after all, that's what all the people from the outer-rim of the galaxy looked like. He hated the Americans the most, out of all the people on Earth, with all of his essence and being. A.C.E. was in his mid-500s, but looked over 5,000 years old, because of the different aging lengths of different molecules. He usually wore an army-type helmet with a strange type of monocular attached to it. He wore an old tattered-up yellow cape that he found on the dead body of his previous gang leader (that he assassinated). His main outfit was brown except for the metallic chest plate, two metallic wrist bands, two metallic knee pads, two yellow shoulder pads and the two yellow stripes that ran thickly down the side of either leg. The funny thing was; why did he wear all that useless armor?

"I can never escape you, Animilyarne," A.C.E. complained. "You'd better get lost, because I'm ten times as powerful as when last we met!"

"Now, is that any way to speak to an old friend?" Animallian replied.

"I'm not your friend!" A.C.E. said angrily. "Your sarcasm is of no use to me, Animilyarne."

"That's Animallian!" Animallian corrected A.C.E. "Won't you ever learn?"

At that precise moment, the vigilante disappeared!

"Where could he've gone?" thought A.C.E. Suddenly, "Ughhhhhhh," Animallian Contra Extreme sounded. "You have no ethics, you attack your enemy from behind, you are unhonorable. Now you'll pay, by losing your life, I think."

"You thought? It's a miracle!" Animallian exclaimed. "Or maybe this is a mix-up of some sort, after-all, who would invest these mighty powers in you?" Animallian then kicked A.C.E. in the rear.

"You continually use sarcasm as a defense, but my mind is much more refined than you could ever imagine," A.C.E. responded.

The vigilante dodged the arch-villain's puny throw. "Hey A.C.E., where have you been for the last three years, or so? I bet you were in Bermuda with the girls, you scoundrel," Animallian said with skepticism. "Why did you fake your death?"

"I faked it for you," A.C.E. replied, "I only made you think I did, so I could prepare my latest, Anti-Animilyarne weapon."

"It won't work, A.C.E.," the vigilante answered as he gutted the villain, (who couldn't talk, think, and fight at the same time) with a "bear-strength" punch to the ribs. Animallian disappeared again.

He couldn't really disappear, but had the blood of a "chameleon" in his body.

Animallian was right behind A.C.E. the moment A.C.E. said, "I'm real peeved now!"

A.C.E.'s mother was the only being that ever loved him, or even liked him, for that matter! His gang members didn't like him, they only feared his powers (not intellectual ones, for sure) and obeyed his every command. At this point in time, the gang members were in the middle of Mayhem City, with Mayhem being both their state of existence and the real name of the city (another one of life's bizzare coincidences). The gang members were ravaging and plundering the city because they thought their boss was dead, and were out to have a good time while it lasted.

"How can I win?" thought A.C.E. "I know, I'll try to fool him into thinking I'm going to retreat." "Animilyarne," he said aloud, "I'm leaving, and I'm not going to fight with you anymore, I'll just go rob some other merchants."

"Where did you say you were going?" Animallian questioned as he shot a silky-type of strand at his rival. The silk strand stuck to the villain like glue and wrapped around A.C.E. quickly (after all, doesn't this vigilante have the powers of all animals, including the "silk worm?"). But A.C.E. simply used the old transition powers to become a type of gas, leaving the strands at the spot where his feet had been.

A.C.E. pulled out a sleek looking weapon, which was like a gun, except it had a small, metal ball where the nozzle would normally be. He tugged on the trigger and a ray of intense light, a ruby colored ray shot from the spherical shape. He fired shot after contemptuous shot towards the vigilante, but it's hard to hit a person with "animal-instincts" and the famous "cheetah-speed." He dodged blast after blast, and counted the misses. "One miss...two misses...three..." he continued on, until...

The vigilante let out a howling, blood-curdling scream of intense pain as the ray blasted his chest open. He couldn't possibly avoid this barrage of blasts which just kept on coming from all directions. He had just slid to the side to avoid a shot, only to be hit by another one.

"That's it! I win!" A.C.E. exclaimed proudly. "This day's proved the end of my enemy Animilyarne! I believe I'll take the blasted fool to

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# THE OPEN BOOK



BY JIMMY SEXTON

ASSISTANT EDITOR

*Army Blue* (Crown Publishers, Inc., September 1989), 436 pages, currently available only in hardback, \$19.95, by Lucian K. Truscott IV.

The first "Vietnam" novel to actually take a hard look at the politics of the Vietnam war, *Army Blue* conjures up precise and sometimes frightening images with a behind the scenes look of what really went on there.

In Lucian K. Truscott IV's novel, the political aspect of the war is examined at every level from an Infantry platoon, through the Colonels and the Generals, the CIA Chief of Station, and up to the Secretary of Defense. *Blue* asks the questions: what was the United States doing over there? And why was the war fought the way it was?

**ARMY  
BLUE**  
A NOVEL BY THE AUTHOR OF *DOGS GRAY*  
**Lucian K.  
Truscott IV**

The answers to those two questions can best be answered in the words of "The General" in the book: "This war is being fought as a criminal enterprise."

*Army Blue* is the story of Lieutenant Matthew Nelson Blue IV, a weapons platoon leader falsely accused of desertion in the face of the enemy. While Blue spends most of his time throughout the book in the Long Binh stockade in Saigon, his father and grandfather journey to Vietnam and use their very different, but effective, resources in securing Blue's release from the stockade and proving his innocence.

Exactly why was Blue charged with such a serious offense? An offense that if proven guilty sometimes results in a hanging? Blue stumbles upon and unscrews the lid of dreaded and certainly dark truth of our American presence in Vietnam, drug trafficking.

"It was a misbegotten, dishonorable war, fought for dishonorable reasons, in a dishonorable way, yet fought largely by honorable men," said Truscott. "This confusion of honorable men and dishonorable tasks is profound, and it's the central issue of *Army Blue*. What happens when an honorable man tries to fight a dishonorable war, honorably?"



Lucian K. Truscott IV

Blue has been wrongly charged because the military wants to cover up its supposedly secret drug enterprise, which profited the U.S.'s war campaign. To make sure nobody outside the military learns about what Blue has unearthed and what is happening to him, the Army privately hurries Blue through the pre-court-martial process and conveniently "disappears" every member of his platoon, except one.

Blue also brings to mind the question of whether or not the military will ever admit to the mistakes it made in Vietnam. According to Truscott, any war fought the way the Vietnam war was fought deserves to be lost.

"Any war that had to depend on drug dealing

and drug profits, any war that had to eradicate the jungle with Agent Orange, any war that had to eradicate a large measure of the civilian population to 'deny the enemy its power base,' any war fought like that deserves to be lost," he said. "We lost the war, and we deserved to lose the war, and I don't think anyone is prepared to admit that salient fact and move forward."

The inspiration for *Army Blue* came from an incident that happened to Truscott while stationed at Fort Carson, Colo. The Army was denying Truscott permission to publish an article he had written for the *Village Voice* about the rampant problem of heroin abuse in the Army. The Army and Truscott disputed over the article and Truscott refused to withdraw it from publication.

As a result, Truscott received a threatening telephone call from a Lieutenant General in the Pentagon saying he had the power to send him directly to Vietnam if he did not withdraw the article. Lucian's father, Colonel Truscott, was listening in on the conversation.

"I was stunned," said Truscott. "There I was, with my father listening, on the brink of being punitively assigned to a combat zone. It was one of the Army's most heinous crimes. My father and I just looked at each other, and at that moment I could tell that the Four Stars my grandfather earned in World War II, my father's valor in Korea—none of it mattered."

"My whole family had given its life to the U.S. Army, and it was being thrown right back in my face. I told the General I'd have him court-martialed and thrown in jail for 30 years."

After a prolonged battle with the Pentagon, Truscott resigned from the Army and joined the *Voice* staff.

"Had I gone to Vietnam," he said, "what happens to the main character—a loyal soldier, framed and court-martialed—probably would have happened to me."

Truscott provides the reader with great characterizations and feeling that you are actually there, in Blue's shoes, experiencing his thoughts and emotions, and know his pain. Just what eventually becomes of the court-martial and what happens to Blue provides a shocking and memorable conclusion to *Army Blue*.



## Animallian from page 4

my cave." The arch-villain picked up the hero's limp body and carried him to the cave.

Animallian woke up many days later to find himself in a cave whose walls were encased in slime. The air was filled with a musty stench. Among the slime and stench could be found a few chains and shackles hanging from the withered walls.

"How long have I been out?" Zeak wondered. "Must have been an hour or six, I hope that's all." Among the before mentioned items appearing on the wall were many strange things that Animallian couldn't even describe, let alone find a name for. "This couldn't be Earth, could it?" he continued thinking. "I bet A.C.E. has taken me out into space again. The last time he brought me into space was my own choice, I hitch-hiked. But this time...oooooh!" His chest spasmed with pain as it had been doing while he was unconscious over the past few days, he just hadn't felt it until now.

He looked down at his chest to see how bad

the damage was, only to find he couldn't lift his head. He was chained down to a table by very tough steel. "This is some extremely thick stuff," he thought, "but I just can't figure out how he did it...I'm the fastest and..." he cut off shortly, due to the entrance of his arch-rival, A.C.E., right through the wall of the cave...

"I'm the best!" A.C.E. boasted proudly. "You thought you were the best, but I won!" The villain pause for a moment to think about what he was going to say next.

Animallian tried to tune A.C.E. out by thinking about something that interested himself. "It was duck season and I drove 'my Chevy to the levee,' so to speak. I left the truck, walked to its side, reached into the bed and pulled out my shotgun. I was going to shoot down a couple of good-sized mallards. I waited near the levee, and prepared to send some shots into the next flock of ducks to pass by. My dog, Spot, was ready to run and fetch the fallen ducks. The woods surrounded me; they pulled me in and closed me off..."

Animallian was interrupted by the voice of A.C.E., who was not about to let Animallian keep

from listening. "You must listen to me, or I'll kill you right now!" A.C.E. screamed at the top of his lungs.

"Get on with it!" Animallian stated, angrily. "If only I can keep the jerk talking..." he thought.

"Listen to me!" A.C.E. yelled. His voice calmed and he again said, "Listen to me. One day I fell down a hole in the road. I ended up in a strange world of molecules and pollution."

"I get it," Animallian interrupted, "so you became a pollution lover from then on out?"

"How can you be so juvenile, when you are about to die?" A.C.E. questioned the vigilante. "When I fell into that world, I was dumped into a gigantic pool of chemicals, and nearly drowned from the tremendous amounts of chemicals flowing down my throat."

"You know the old saying," Animallian jokingly said, "You are what you eat!"

"Grow up man! You're as good as dead!" the villain replied. And he left the room by re-entering the wall. He went to change the setting on his "ultimate weapon" to destroy the vigilante. Meanwhile, Animallian began to think...

## The Viewing Booth

by Jimmy L. Sexton

### ✓ "When Harry Met Sally" (1989, R, 96 min, SCHEDULED RELEASE: 12/14

A delightful comedy of the sexes if there ever was one, Rob Reiner's ("Meathead" in television's hit *All in the Family*) *When Harry Met Sally...* is the cream of the crop when it comes to male chauvinism vs. a "perky, chin up, basically happy person."

Harry Burns (Billy Crystal, *Throw Momma from the Train*) meets Sally Albright (Meg Ryan, *Top Gun*, *Innerspace*) when he hitches a ride with her from Chicago to New York in 1977, making a slight pass in her direction. Through the course of the next 10 years, Harry bumps into Sally on a mutual plane trip in 1982, and makes a more direct and to-the-point pass. He finally sees her again in 1987; he recovering from a bad marriage and her being "just-broken-up-with-a-significant-other."

The two begin a "great pals relationship" that does not include sex. However, since the movie is chockfull with great jokes, the real question remains "can a couple have sex and still be funny," not "can a couple have sex and still be friends."

Harry believes that if he shows a girl with enough glib, smart-aleck charm, and superior left brain logic, the women will spill their guts about their romantic history, which is about to include him, without knowing how or why they did so. To Harry, boys will be boys and girls will be sex objects, never friends.

Maybe yes, maybe no is what this movie and life tells us. Writer Nora Ephron is excellent in utilizing some of Reiner's personal experiences with his ex-wife, comic and director Penny Marshall (*Big*). Along with Crystal's close friendship with Reiner, this movie provides great feelings gut-busting entertainment for everyone.

Rating ★ ★ ★ 1/2

### ✓ "Listen to Me" (1989, PG-13, 107 min, SCHEDULED RELEASE: 12/7)

Some of television and film's great young actors collaborate on this project to make a "positive image" drama. Consisting primarily of past reform school inmate Tucker Muldowney (Kirk Cameron, *Growing Pains*), intelligent and beautiful Monica Toman-ski (Jamie Gertz, *Less Than Zero*), and proud, but daring Donna Lumis (Amanda Peterson, *Can't Buy Me Love*), the debate team at upscale Kenmont College provides the setting for these young people to be heard on "the issues."

With a debate championship on the horizon and the opportunity to appear before several Chief Justices in a televised debate about the controversial Roe v. Wade decision creating the movie's frameworks, director and screenwriter Douglas Day Stewart (*An Officer and a Gentleman*) spends little time detailing the "mental" sport that Roy Scheider's character, debate coach Charlie Nichols, describes as "meaner than football."

The heart of the film comes from the kids' "secrets." Though *Listen To Me* appears sympathetic with the Pro-Life position, Stewart is nevertheless careful in making it clear that this is an issue of arousing portions.

Rating ★ ★

### ✓ "Homeboy" (1988, R, 158 min, SCHEDULED RELEASE: 11/22)

Starring Mickey Rourke, Christopher Walken, and Debra Feuer, this highly under-rated boxing flick will have viewers pumped up and revving for more. Rourke (*Angel Heart*, 1987) has a unique gift for portraying outlandish characters and his Johnny Walker character is no exception.

A "B-grade" boxer dreaming of becoming a middleweight contender, Walker experiences more bad breaks than good. In the ring, Walker is a vicious and angry fighter who's able to take truckloads of punishment. Out of the ring he's a shy, reserved, soft-spoken country hick. Guided by his manager, Walken (*Biloxi Blues*, 1988), Walker continues fighting matches way over his head until his love interest, Ruby (Feuer, *To Live and Die in L.A.*) gives him a "transitory escape from his dismal world."

Though sporadic and misguided at times, this boxing film shows great scenes in the ring, with Rourke's Walker a whirlwind of aggression.

Rating ★ ★ ★



# BEATS PER MINUTE

by Christopher A. Clark

## We've been starving for this

On campus, there is a movement underway to establish a dance club for Missouri Southern students. This is a tremendous idea, but one that needs to be handled with care to prevent it from turning into the average Bon-Jovi/Taylor Dayne remix-hell joint.

Gina Miller, who is spearheading the drive for the club, has been able to survey students to find out what they would like to hear and dance to. While we must remain open to all kinds of music, the emphasis of this club should be on alternative music, plain and simple.

Call it affirmative action for alternative music. Everyday, we are exposed to top-40 music, but by its very nature, it's repetitive. Joplin has two top-40 stations and enough country music to make a dog sick. The only way to avoid Richard Marx, Milli Vanilli and Randy Travis is to keep a coma until late Sunday night when MTV shows "120 Minutes." And we all know that KXMS, the college's (student???) radio station, is no avenue for alternative tunes, so Miller's idea is genuine, and should be given immediate approval.

A student operated dance club would provide for an audience that has been starving for new music. I hope Gina and everyone working hard on this project sees this to its fruition. They deserve it, and the students deserve it.

Now, on with the page.



## BEST OF THE EIGHTIES



Yeah, it's cliché. But everyone has a best-of-the-eighties list, and now Beats Per Minute offers its list of the best.

This is a simple list of what we (I) think are the best dance offerings over the past few years. No rationalizing, no justification; just a list.

First, we'll list the 30 best 12" singles and then proffer our 10 best LP's.

1. **The Perfect Kiss**/ New Order  
Leave it to New Order to make a good time sound gloomy.

2. **Lips Like Sugar**/ Echo and the Bunnymen  
This 1987 release remains the Bunnies's best work.

3. **Headhunter**/ Front 242  
Angst-ridden industrial groove that makes death danceable.

4. **Rigor Mortis**/ A Split Second  
Yet another wonderful aerobic tune about death and decay.

5. **Bizarre Love Triangle**/ New Order  
In concert, N.O. sleeps through this one, but the dance floor is another story.

6. **Stigmata**/ Ministry  
It's tough to call this dance music, but with Ministry nowadays, you have to use your imagination.

7. **Everyday is Halloween**/ Ministry  
A big hit before front-man Alain (now Alien) Jourgensen got angry.

8. **It's My Life**/ Talk Talk  
If you're in love, but don't quite know how to tell that person to get the hell away from you, this is your song.

9. **Greater Reward**/ Severed Heads  
Another falling out of love beat-experiment. "You can hold me all my life, but paradise can take me twice."

10. **Dogshit**/ Skinny Puppy  
Forget their garb about animal rights, Skinny Puppy does industrial as good as anyone.

11. **Brand New Lover**/ Dead or Alive

12. **Blue Monday 1988**/ New Order

13. **Something About You**/ Level 42

14. **Behind the Wheel**/ Depeche Mode

15. **Oh L'amour**/ Erasure

16. **Stand Up**/ Underworld

17. **If I Ever**/ Red Flag

18. **Fascination Street**/ The Cure

19. **Cars (12"—1987)**/ Gary Numan

20. **Spin Me Around**/ Dead or Alive

21. **The Land of Rape and Honey**/ Ministry

22. **Ceremony**/ New Order

23. **Until Death**/ Front 242

24. **Like A Prayer**/ Madonna

25. **Good Life**/ Inner City

26. **First Aid**/ Skinny Puppy

27. **Lullaby**/ Book Of Love

28. **True Faith**/ New Order

29. **Drama**/ Erasure

30. **Devil Does Drugs**/ Thrill Kill Kult

## Top Albums

1. **Substance**/ New Order  
N.O.'s biggest on Qwest Records went platinum for good reason. This compilation of their 12" successes is a dream.

2. **The Land of Rape and Honey**/ Ministry  
Angry, fast and loud. No, it's not Metallica's latest, instead an attempt to shake the dance scene by combining punk and drum machines. Good stuff.

3. **Front by Front**/ Front 242  
Belgium's favorite industrial sons produced last year's biggest factory hit, "Headhunter."

4. **Technique**/ New Order

5. **A Split Second**/ A Split Second  
Death, death, death. For good measure, let's throw in a little death.

6. **Rip It Up**/ Dead or Alive  
If Pete Burns was a girl, I know some guys that would go for him.

7. **The Two Ring Circus**/ Erasure

8. **Cleanse, Fold, and Manipulate**/ Skinny Puppy  
A plea for animals set to a beat.

9. **The Wall**/ Pink Floyd  
If "Run Like Hell" wasn't on the soundtrack, this would not be on our list.

10. **Dice**/ Andrew Dice Clay  
Hey, somebody has to stick up for this guy.



BY MIKE L. MALLORY  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

**Spike** Elvis Costello, available in LP, cassette, and compact disc.

With the release of his debut album, *My Aim Is True* in 1977, Elvis Costello drew critical praise and comparisons to Buddy Holly. The album was named album of the year by *Rolling Stone* Magazine, and launched a career that would produce many albums filled with different styles, with each album bringing different levels of success for Costello.

Elvis Costello's second release, *This Years Model*, brought more critical approval along with comparisons to Bob Dylan.

Elvis Costello, long absent from the playlists of top-40 radio and all commercial radio in general, sang in the song "Radio, Radio" from 1978's *This Years Model*. "I want to bite the hand that feeds me, I want to bite that hand so badly."

After twelve years and as many albums, Costello, long neglected by American radio finally received fortuitous, if not overdue, airplay on top-40 radio with the single, "Veronica," from his 1989 release *Spike*.

Elvis Costello, A.K.A. Mac Manus, has never been one to follow this week's music trend in

## Sounds

order to gain airplay on the often homogenous American radio stations. The exposure Costello's music has received on the airwaves has been sporadic.

"Everyday I Write the Book," from Costello's 1983 album *Punch the Clock*, is a song which received limited airplay when it was released and featured a video clip which failed to bolster album sales.

1982 saw the release of *Imperial Bedroom*, an album which many critics applauded, this time comparing Costello to George Gershwin.

In 1981, tracks from his LP *Trust*, received play on album oriented radio stations. That same year Costello recorded an album of country standards with his band, *The Attractions* in Nashville.

"I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down," from the 20 song LP *Get Happy* released in 1980, also received limited radio airplay. Prior to that, "Green Shirt," a song from the 1978 album *Armed Forces*, was covered by a member of the Monkees, Peter Noone.

Throughout his career there have been many recording artists anxious to record Costello's songs. Linda Rondstadt covered songs by Costello, not only because they were good songs, but because

of the idea of doing songs written by Elvis Costello. On his latest release, *Spike*, Elvis Costello had the opportunity to work with a song-writer's songwriter, Paul McCartney. Their collaborative efforts resulted in the single, "Veronica," and the album cut, "Pads, Paws and Claws."

Costello recorded material for *Spike* in studios in Dublin, New Orleans, London and Los Angeles.

Included in the recording sessions were McCartney, Roger McGuinn, Chrissie Hynde, Marc Ribot, Benmont Tench, Mitchell Froom, Donal Lunney, Steve Wickam, Allen Toussaint, T-Bone Burnett, and *The Dirty Dozen Brass Band*.

The songs range from the radio-ready "Veronica," to the instrumental jazz-rave "Stalin Malone," performed by *The Dirty Dozen Brass Band*.

Elvis Costello has at times been praised by critics and fans, while at other times he has been written off as a quirky artist. Elvis Costello is either liked a lot for his music, or not given a second chance to win over the timid listener. With the amount of material he has recorded in the past and the songs he will likely record in the future, sooner or later Elvis Costello will have recorded something to satisfy even the most discerning listener's individual musical preference.

BY MIKE L. MALLORY  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

**Rei Momo** David Byrne (Luaka Bop/Sire), available on compact disc and cassette.

Talking Heads' debut album :77, released in 1977, contains one of the best songs of the so-called new-wave-punk movement ever recorded. The song "Psycho Killer" has been a favorite song of mine since the first time I saw it performed live.

The first rock band I saw in concert played the song "Psycho Killer," as well as songs from their just then released album *Fear of Music*. The band was *Talking Heads*, the stage was Taylor Auditorium at Missouri Southern, the year was 1979.

David Byrne put on an intense performance that show, working up an intense sweat, and working the sparse crowd into a lack-lustre frenzy. After attempting to show a sincere dancing reaction on the stage, some of the more enthusiastic fans were let down by the badged-up men who were attempting to protect the audience from having too much fun. There hasn't been a decent rock concert held at Taylor Auditorium since then.

I became a *Talking Heads* fan, a fan of the band as well as a fan of the man behind the *Heads*, David Byrne, after purchasing the band's second album, *More Songs about Buildings and Food* in 1978.

David Byrne has written a steady output of songs for over a decade. His latest effort *Rei Momo*, a title referring to the King of Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, is a collection of Latin flavored songs. It is also one of his most ambitious projects to date.

David Byrne is interested in world music. Having produced a compilation of songs by Latin musicians, *Brazil Classics I*, in the past year, and

now with the recording of an album containing instruments such as conga, timbal, batteria, campanita, tambora and bongo, David Byrne is one of the music world's most visible purveyors of world music.

*Rei Momo*, the first solo release for David Byrne, consists of a host of musical guests performing on fifteen songs. With no fewer than ten performers on most of the tracks, this is not the typical solo project. Then again, David Byrne is anything but typical.

Having been the leader of one of most successful bands to emerge from the late 1970's new wave of music makers, David Byrne has been at the forefront of edge-breaking music longer than most of today's chart-toppers have sat collectively in front of their MTV's.

David Byrne has ventured down various entertainment avenues during his illustrious career. From band leader, to collaborations with Brian Eno, to video artist and record producer, David Byrne has found success with each new musical corridor entered.

Consider David Byrne, movie mogul: *True Stories* was a mildly successful release containing 'true stories' taken from the headlines of supermarket tabloids. The movie included actor John Goodman, currently known for his work on the television series "Rosanne," among others. For a first time effort at a project of this nature, David Byrne was successful indeed.

What could be the next outlet for the muses of David Byrne?

If *Rei Momo* proves to be as successful as it should be, perhaps this type of music will find a wider audience. David Byrne could have started something with *Rei Momo*. I hope it doesn't stop.

BY MIKE L. MALLORY  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

**The Front** *The Front*, (CBS Records) available in cassette and compact disc.

Who are *The Front* and why haven't I heard them before?

*The Front* are five young men doing what they do best, five individuals joined together to form a band combining the sum of their musical experiences to create a sound all their own.

*The Front* are singer Michael Anthony Franano; keyboard player Bobby Franano; guitarist Mike Green; drummer Shane Miller; and bass player Randy Jordan.

One of the reasons I haven't heard *The Front* before is because their first album as a band was just released this past October.

Another reason I haven't heard *The Front* before is because there are not many people who have heard them. The number of people who have heard *The Front*, however, is growing. The reason people are beginning to pick up on the music of *The Front* has nothing to do with hype. *The Front* doesn't put on a front. *The Front* are real people, making real music.

The immediacy of a live performance along with the precision of practiced musicianship, crafty songwriting, and a sense of direction are combined to form a winning debut for *The Front*.

Managed by McGhee Entertainment, *The Front* have been together in its current line-up since early 1988, when bassist Randy Jordan joined the group.

Recorded at Le Studio in Quebec Canada, *The Front's* eponymous album provides ample reason to purchase a CD player. The sensation of hear-

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# 'What a long, strange trip it's been!'



Mark Ancell



Mark Ancell

(clockwise from left) A Revolutionary War statue salutes all who enter the French Market. Bourbon Street, where one may find any type of entertainment or goods they wish. "Michael, the One Man Banjo," wowed early-morning waterfront ventures with his banjo virtuosity. Night-time view of Canal Street where the annual Mardi Gras parade is held.



Chris Cox



Mark Ancell

## 'Ol' New Orleans





Mark Ancell



(clockwise, from left) Many beautiful homes line the streets of the Crescent City. A dizzying variety of musicians can be found in the French Market, such as this tuba player. As he huddles his body closer together for warmth, a homeless man shivers on the chilly French Quarter sidewalk. Homelessness has become one of the largest problems in the United States. The Original Coffeeshop, Cafe Du Monde, is a favorite breakfast spot among tourists and natives alike. Benglets (French donuts) and coffee cost less than \$3. One of the highlights of the trip was music. A Dixieland band in the French Market featured this young trumpeter as lead musician. Another shot of the French Quarter, one of the most famous places on Earth. Attention to detail is standard in New Orleans architecture and art, such as can be found in this intricate fountain.



Mark Ancell



Mark Ancell





Mark Ancell



Chris Cox



Mark Ancell

Chris Cox





Chris Cox



Chris Cox

(clockwise from left) An historic church towers above New Orleans' French Market district. The building is a favorite among snapshot-snapping tourists, such as The Chart staff. An alleyway by day, this site becomes a nightclub after dark. Jazz and blues, along with traditional Zydeco music, fills the chilly November air. A garden cafe, where one may enjoy traditional Cajun cuisine, is among the many dining opportunities in the crescent city. Mules are used in New Orleans as a form of transportation. The mules pull large carts which carry tourists around the French Quarter.



Mark Ancell



Chris Cox



ing the sounds of children playing at the end of the song "Violent World," followed by the sounds of falling rain and the noise of an empty playground leading into the next song, "Sin," should be experienced using the best available playback system.

Opening up the debut album by *The Front* is the first single and video release, "Fire." Mike Green's driving rhythm guitar sizzles as Michael Anthony Franano takes us to the other side with a heat-filled vocal performance.

The second track, "Sunshine Girl" is a fun summertime radio song with drummer Shane Miller providing a rock-steady beat.

"Pain" is the title of the third selection. Additional vocals are provided on this song by singer Kat Dyson, the only outside performer on the album.

"Sweet Addiction" is a song about the drug love, or the love of drugs. The decision concerning meaning is left up to the listener.

Keyboardist Bobby Franano solos on a segue leading to the song "Ritual."

## Sounds

"Ritual" is the title of a section of Danny Sugarmen's book about the Doors. No One Here Gets Out Alive. Comparisons of singer Michael Anthony Franano to Doors' singer Jim Morrison are almost inevitable. Like Morrison, Franano's lyrics have impact, containing both poetic and visualistic elements.

Comparisons to other performers aside, Franano does have an individualistic quality in his performance and writing that must be deemed original.

Side two opens with the song "L'Motion." Randy Jordan's steady bass playing is both noticeable, and notable. Jordan also provides backing vocals throughout the recording.

"Sister Moon," the second cut on side two, like "Sunshine Girl" on side one, is a fun guitar-driven song.

"In The Garden" is one of most stylistic tracks on the album showing diverse influences and subtle biblical and social lyric references. Bobby

Franano shares songwriting credit with his brother Michael on this song as well as the following cut, "Violent World."

"Violent World" is a song that deals with the harsh realities of 'degradation, solicitation, lust and temptation, supervision, polititions, pain and frustration.' Michael Anthony Franano provides one of the recordings most insightful and most easily misinterpreted lyrical lines in this song. Listen to the song.

On the final song on the album, "Sin," Mike Green's guitar gently weeps during the solo. Green's performance on the debut is laid-back and unpretentious. The performance by the other band members allow the songs to stand out while revealing their individual musical talents at the same time.

*The Front* is a band from Kansas City. There is more behind *The Front* than any publicist or reviewer could possibly write. Give them a listen.

# Musician rocks enthusiastic Joplin audience

BY JOHN L. FORD AND MIKE L. MALLORY  
EDITORS OF AVALON

Rock and roll music was born of the blues, and Texas could well be considered the midwife of that birth. Both the blues and rock and roll are still alive and growing, evidenced by the musical stylings of one of Texas' sons, blues stylist Bugs Henderson.

Bugs Henderson plays the blues with the ferocity of any of today's young rock and roll or blues guitarist. After playing the blues for over 25 years, Henderson is currently on tour more than 200 days a year, bringing his renditions of classic blues tunes and modern originals to an evergrowing audience.

"There's a lot of different music out there, but the blues is in all of it, no matter what the style; it's where our roots are," said Henderson.

During a performance to a standing-room only crowd at Legends nightclub, Bugs showed Joplin what it was like to play the blues as he helped spread the news of the vitality of this art form.

Although his style has similarities to other nationally recognized blues artist such as Stevie Ray Vaughn, Robert Cray, and early ZZ Top, he does not credit them as influences. Instead, he credits earlier artists such as Link Wray, Chet Atkins, and James Burton.

"I listened to everybody when I started," said Henderson, "there's always good music flowing around."

As ZZ Top has come to be known as the best little band from Texas, Bugs Henderson's band could well be the best little unknown band from Texas.

Henderson, who hails from the Dallas area, having been a blues musician for over 25 years, could well have provided inspiration for some of Texas' noted blues flavored guitarists such as Stevie Ray, and Jimmy Vaughn, and ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons. Henderson, while maybe not a direct influence for those players, has a dedication to the

roots of the blues which could provide inspiration to any young player who ever had the opportunity to witness the player in action.

The younger players whose styles share similarities with Henderson are from a different generation of players.

"I don't see ZZ as being one of my influences, because I started playing this kind of music before they were even around," said Henderson. "I think the new crop of blues artists are responsible for it becoming accepted to a younger audience, especially Stevie Ray Vaughn."

Injecting his earlier influences such as Wray, Atkins, Burton—not to mention the Kings, B.B. and Albert, Henderson wowed the genial audience at the nightspot by taking parts of his elder bluesmen styles and blending those into a style uniquely his own. Particularly notable was his performances of original tunes, both instrumental and vocal.

His extended guitar jams held the majority of listeners apt attention. Glancing around the smoky room, one could notice wide smiles on many of the faces, and nods of acknowledgement of the showman's guitar expertise.

While his music is up to par with that of musicians signed to major labels, Henderson said he would not limit his style of music to what was considered popular by the music industry. With three independently produced and released albums to his credit, Henderson has penned many quality tunes.

"Each album is on a different, independent, label," he said. "Oh, I had many chances to sign with several of the big labels, but I want to stay true to my roots—the blues."

The lure of big money doesn't hold influence over Henderson who said he was satisfied being able to make a living doing what he enjoyed.

"We would have had albums for sale here tonight, but when we played St. Louis last night (Friday), I sold them all," he said.

Currently, originals make up better than half of the three-piece-band's playlist. Included onstage

with Henderson were a drummer who is also the busdriver, and a bass player who has been with the guitarist for fourteen years.

Although he has been playing as long or longer than many musicians who are now on their "reunion tours," Henderson said he did not approve of the idea of them "making millions..."

Players like us are what's kept the blues alive," Henderson said. "We're out there night after night, playing and entertaining thousands of people a few hundred at a time. I don't have anything against them doing their thing, I just can't respect an artist who takes two or three years off at a time."

Blues oriented musicians such as Jimmy Page, Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck who have gained the acceptance of the public often fused the blues with rock and roll styles.

"They were already accepted by the public so they could sneak that stuff (the blues) in, and get it to the public," said Henderson.

Calling the performance at Legends a "party for some of our friends," Henderson welcomed several musicians onstage in extended versions of classic tunes such as the Jimi Hendrix burner, "Redhouse."

Although the guest musicians did a good job of playing, their presence onstage took away the spotlight from the star of the show. Henderson, however, didn't seem to mind sharing the spotlight, as he picked up the bass guitar in a "spur of the moment thing" to allow his fellow musicians to show their chops.

Music fans were caught up in the performers' enthusiasm. Many had traveled from area towns to catch the show, while others heard of Henderson's reputation, and had to see for themselves his style of blues virtuosity.

"I travel a lot to Tulsa, and he (Henderson) has a pretty large following down there," said audience member Jeff Kuhn. "That's the reason I'm here tonight; because of his reputation for hard rockin' blues."



# The Magnificent Calf Rodeo Michael Penn Lee Herndon



**SISTERS ARE A PITIFUL WASTE!** Not only was my life affected by my sister in a less than favorable way but thousands of you have written to tell me of your "sister horrors." These wastes of protoplasm fix themselves on the backs of brothers in the same fashion as saltwater parasites that ride the backs of certain fish species that swim along the great oceanic reefs. If you were unfortunate to have been the first born child in your family only to have the love and affection knocked aside by "little sissy," then you know why this topic is so very important. When the "thing" arrived, you and I were forgotten brothers of the universe. I admit that these "persons" should be shown a certain and specific amount of affection by the parents, but, by all that is holy...the folks go kinda nutty...don't you think?

Parents, please take note. When you bring to see the stacks and stacks of diapers that these "bundles" use...well, just get ready. The problem compounds itself for the balance of the female-child's life. In fact, if any parenting crew could truly imagine the amount of laundry these little girls will use throughout their lives that is the diapers, the four thousand clothing changes each day, and the bills for the department-store purchases...well, it could just overwhelm and discourage them, causing them to think twice about asking God for a female child. And where is the little boy? Yes, the loving firstborn boychild is sadly neglected and forgotten largely because of the mountains of growing laundry that is required to properly take care of the daughter. You can see the beginnings of child neglect—can you not?

During the sister's development years a bond is forged between the parents and the "thing." It seems as if a heavenly visitation is in progress. But we brothers of the world know better. And please consider this female restroom attendance records. Not only do little females "hog" the bathroom but females do not change their habits when they reach adulthood either. If you do not believe me, just stand around the restroom of any social activity and you can record, for yourself, the number of times females attend. It should horrify you! There will be millions of them all trying to get into the little room and fix the four inches of their foreheads with "teasing and rattling" combs, and all of them will be speaking in some uni-

que language that has something to do with home economics or finances. I think you get the picture!

Now my home life in rural Missouri was an enjoyable experience unless the "creature" was present. I mean, we had cattle, pigs, a few sheep, and a horse. I was a regular cowboy. I had great seasons of pleasure until my kid sister decided to do either one of two things, force me to let her participate in my many adventures, or, provide our folks with a detailed account of my adventures. You see "butting in and rattling" are two things sisters do very well. I can remember many sound thrashings from my dad that were the direct result of my kid sister recounting certain crimes I'd committed. I got to the point where I began to enjoy the "beatings." I would think of ways to receive and relish the pain. But, after all the pain came the sister-payback.

There has never been a fiend like me—that is in dealing with sister paybacks. Retaliation was my best friend. I employed the double-circled hair-pull, the hideous cuss-out, and my best trick was a combination of chariot race and staircase...let your mind wonder! I always used a "throaty" laugh when I inflicted her punishment on her. No doubt I would have turned into a normal human person if it hadn't been for this sister. I considered being an executioner for my life's work. Of course, when my parents were around I could imitate church deacons, but—once they left the area—I became a sort of a monster. During these times I could be found wringing my hands a good deal.

The most enjoyable of my infamous paybacks I now refer to as "the magnificent calf rodeo." It took place in one of our barns. We had a big barn lot area and in it two barns were located. The larger barn housed most of our hay and our henhouse. The smaller barn was an old corn bin and storage area on one side, and a catch pen on the other. The older barns all had asbestos shingles and the shingles were nailed onto the one-by sheathing and simply stuck through the walls and protruded sharply inside. I knew all about the nails because a time or two I had backed into them while trying to vaccinate a calf. On this particular day I saw another use for the exposed nails.

My sister had been bugging me all day long. I

couldn't take it any longer. I told her, "Listen sissy, why don't you go find a girlfriend to play with and leave me alone."

"No, I don't wanna."

You see, I just couldn't get rid of her! Then I saw the nails in a new way. Well, I couldn't get her to simply jump on the wall and let the nails puncture her. I mean even a dumb ol' sister wouldn't do that for you, right? But, what if I could get her to participate in a rodeo? We had some little "bucket-calves" and they were always frolicking around the barnlot and they used to "suck" on everything they could. So, I saw the potential for a true sister annihilation.

I lured a couple of the calves into the catch pen and I told my kid-sister, "Now Patty, you had better run up to the house because I am going to ride some of these calves and you wouldn't want to get hurt."

Brothers, do not ever worry that you'll scare off your prey in telling them they cannot participate in your misadventures. Why, these brazen little vixens will readily desire their own doom by crawling through graveyards or swinging from trees than back down from any such challenge!

"I want to ride one," the creature stated. "If you don't let me ride a calf, I'll tell Daddy."

So, ride she did. I helped her up on one of the friskier ones and the calf bucked and took off around the catch pen and down the east wall—the wall of exposed nails. I think she made about twenty loops before she realized she was mortally wounded. She fell off of the calf and looked at her lacerated arm and leg and began to scream and curse me. I looked at her wounded appendages and realized that she had almost as many wounds as ground hamburger and nearly as many cuts as she had inflicted on me during one of our more infamous wrestling matches. Oh, what joy!

Well, she ran off to the house to turn me in, and I sat down to wait for the screaming to begin and of course my summons came and let the parents "beat" me. I can recall that my parents gave me the best beating ever. When their arms got tired, they called a few of the neighbors over to "sub in," as it were.

Readers, I must put all of this nonsense to the typewriter, so I can get it ready before suppertime. I am typing it up on my new typewriter. I got it for Christmas...from my kid sister!





# A Cat's Life

short fiction by Mike L. Mallory

Tommy was/is a tiger striped cat of unknown breed. His appearance at the farm located three miles from the nearest city was by chance. Most likely some cruel person had 'dumped' him close to the driveway with the reasoning that any person who lived on a farm wouldn't turn away a helpless animal. Upon his arrival he had the appearance of being well fed and his age was estimated to be four weeks. He was small enough to rest on the top side of a shoe being worn by a person who would not have to coax him into such a position. Tommy had indeed not been turned away.

Tommy never was one to stay too close to home. He would be known not to show his face for several days. When he did come around though, it was usually because of a shortage of mice in the barn. Tommy was a working cat and he earned the right to eat 'real' food whenever he so desired by ridding the farm of any mouse that was slower than the cat's pounce.

When Tommy was in need of food or was in search of someone to scratch behind his ear he would let his presence be known by attaching himself to the screen door and peeping through the window. In the cat-eat-mouse world he was living in a fine dining experience could not be made out of mere cat food. Tommy expected to be treated like a human being and to eat whatever his human friends were eating.

Tommy didn't have many cat friends in the country and no feline family that anyone knew about. A determination was made that he had been born a city cat for he was a social animal, not wild.

To the knowledge of his new family, Tommy had never been back to the city where he was brought into the world. His occasional absences were at-

tributed to catting around the neighbors barn. So it was a surprise to the family when Tommy was spotted in the city one day, it was unmistakably him, with his studded cat collar and patch of white on the tip of his tail.

The family made the assumption that Tommy had been 'catnapped' by someone from the city who needed a 'mouser' when in fact, Tommy had made the trip to the city on his own.

Tommy frequented the city regularly, he had his own furry family there. He also had a sense of loyalty to his two legged family he maintained the relationship by returning to the farm.

The day after Tommy was spotted in the city he reappeared at the farm. It was assumed that the alleged catnapper had found him too much to handle and had returned him.

It was a cat's life, one out of nine. It was a double life, with one family that was human and another one feline. The city cat with a country address had found the grass in the city was not as green as the grass in the country. He always returned to the farm for the company of his human friends and the leisure the country life afforded him.

When an approaching snow storm made staying in the city more convenient than attempting to drive through the sure-to-develop snow drifts, Tommy's human family decided to take Tommy to the city with them. He had become a part of the family and would be missed if anything were to happen to him while they were away.

A quick search was made for Tommy but he was nowhere to be found. As his owners were about to leave for the city Tommy attached himself to the screen door and started talking in catanese, saying "let me in."

Since his first trip to the country, Tommy hadn't

enjoyed riding in automobiles, and this ride was no exception. When the car door was opened upon arrival at the house that the family had decided to make their new permanent home, Tommy jumped out and ran like a cat out of hell.

It was thought that he had been caught when a cat identical to him, with the same type of collar and same white patch on the tip of its tail, was brought into the house but this copy cat's mannerisms were a live give-away to a case of mistaken identity. Appearance of this feline brought back the memory of the time Tommy was seen in the city and produced the rationalization that the cat they were now looking at was the same puss they saw doing the cat walk in shoes that they believed to be Tommy's.

Tommy had never been in this new neighborhood during the time he spent in the city.

Lost and alone, Tommy could go in two directions in search of either of his two homes. Or he could find a new home. He was not aware that his bi-ped family's residence had changed, for all he knew they had played a cruel trick on him with the, flashback-of-dumping car ride.

Tommy had lived one life in the city, and then there was the life he had with his family in the country after the catastrophic car ride. The life he lived with his feline family in the city was life number three for Tommy, and he was now about to begin life number four.

As I was getting ready to put my cat, Dogfood, out for the night, she let out a purr. She was happy to see her friend Tommy attached to the screen door.

Cats do have memory. If cats have the ability to remember three out of nine lives, then a double life is an easy when its a cat's life.

# The Masterpiece

short fiction by Tom Haase

A desecration they called it, an insult to humanity. I could not believe hearing such words. I ran from them, then I tried to hide. But their words followed me, their faces, laughing at me. My life... I had spent fifteen years in the creation of this masterpiece, but no, they would not have it. Art, they said, we want art. Is not art the expression of one's heart and soul as it can only be done by the artist? I was heartbroken, destroyed. There was no hope left for me. I had been ridiculed on national TV, by the best and most respected critics. How could they do this to me? It was then I understood. How could I be so blind as to stare past this when it was right there before me. It was a conspiracy, obviously a conspiracy. They hated me because I was too good. They feared my greatness would overwhelm them and they would be cast away, forgotten. But, I would not let people such as this hold me back. No, I was then I made up my mind. A new master-

piece, one no one could scoff for its very lifelike nature. I spent months in the preparation of it. A box, to house the sculptures in, built from stone. Then with my own hands I built the furniture for this abode. It would be a sculpture of people in their natural habitat. Not a sculpture for a museum, but a sculpture that in fact was a museum. The world would be in awe at such a concept.

I invited the critics over for tea. Seven of them showed up. It had been six months since I had last seen them, yet they still wore their smug smiles of my defeat. But I would not let them win.

They all sat down as I brought out the tea and biscuits. I mentioned nothing of art, but received several compliments on my new summer house. Summer house, how dare they give such an insult to my sculpture. Quietly I waited. Then Jerry, one of the elder critics, happened to comment that he was feeling ill. He started to get up. Sud-

denly a strange look crossed his face and he just fell over. I couldn't help it, I was overswept with emotion, I began to laugh. The others were horrified. They looked at each other and then one by one life passed from their bodies. They just simply sagged to the ground.

I almost went into hysteria at this point, but was finally able to control myself and set about my duties. First the blood had to be drawn from each one. This was replaced by a good, clean mixture of formaldehyde. Then seating each figure as I wished them to be, I waited for rigor mortis to set in. Then I began with plastics and ceramic mixtures to cover their bodies.

How poetic, I thought to myself, men who had devoted their lives to the development of art, now had become it. Isn't it grand? I call it critics in action. How sweet.



## IF THE TRUTH BE TOLD

The ill-gotten gains  
of a life and death story  
As we speak  
benefits are being reaped from her glory

The truth remains  
shallow and silent  
Never to be told  
when we deny it

If the truth be told  
she wasn't young enough  
to be too young to die  
If the truth be told  
she was killed in the gleam of an eye

Lack of sensation  
as a worn out defense  
A tarnished reputation  
for a reputed sentence

Judging from the way the jury is swaying  
Budging from foul play to fair play  
In a hurry to make a decision  
Give 'em an inch  
and they'll take a pound of flesh  
Give 'em enough rope  
and they just might hang in  
to suppress the evidence

If the truth be told  
she wasn't old enough  
to be too young to die  
If the truth be told  
she was killed in the gleam of an eye

Lack of education  
as a weak defense  
Lack of protection  
from a chemical death

Judging from the way the jury was swayed  
Budging from foul play to fair play  
In a hurry to make a decision  
Give 'em enough rope  
and they just might hang in  
to suppress the evidence  
Give 'em an inch  
and they'll take a pound of flesh

If the truth be told  
she wasn't old enough  
to be too young to die  
If the truth be told  
she was killed in the gleam of an eye

If the truth be told  
If the truth be known  
She was somebody  
Human

**Mike L. Mallory**



**Nick Coble**

## The Power of the Rain

Resolutions in the rain,  
each drop speaking,  
whispering to my brain  
This child is troubled by the guilt of his pain  
Watching the patterns form to a puddle  
the statistical norm

Abstracts pounding on the tin roof—  
no method to the drone—  
so alone  
my spirit aloof

**Martel Edward Tignor**

## Progression

New doors  
distinct territories apart;  
summer, spring, winter, fall  
changes of the heart,  
and a new voice to call my name  
(tones of happiness)  
Result of a new frontier  
Will I be happy here?

Yes

**Martel Edward Tignor**



**Parental Advice**

It is very hard to say,  
 But we're letting go today.  
 Take flight into tomorrow,  
 But never weep through sorrow.  
 The days you have are, but, a precious few.  
 But they are yours, so do what you do.  
 We'll be here through good and bad,  
 You're a part of us, we're glad we had.  
 Come to us whenever  
 We're here through all endeavors.  
 So take flight into tomorrow,  
 with tears of joy and tears of sorrow,  
 But always remember: you have tomorrow.

**Bryan Brown**

**Echoes**

Someone just called—I forgot their name.  
 They just wanted to talk for a little while  
 and they seemed a little nervous,  
 they seemed a little like me.  
 They had some sort of problem  
 and they didn't speak very clear.  
 They whispered words of strange meaning,  
 They seemed a little like me.  
 They spoke of shadows and songbirds in their dreams  
 and they begged me to listen—why me?  
 Somehow they struck me with their wisdom,  
 they claimed they knew so much, but no one seemed to care.  
 And they whispered sweet words of wisdom,  
 and their words ring in my ears.

**Martel Edward Tignor**

**Flowers**

There was no answer to my flowers  
 nor were they returned,  
 no answer to my flowers,  
 of their fate I haven't learned;  
 Did they bring smiles of happy,  
 or tears of bitter tones?  
 Was she pleased I'd not forgotten  
 or wish I'd leave her just alone?  
 They are just pretty flowers  
 with word songs of their own;  
 The rose just says "I Love You,"  
 the daisies, "Forget Me Not,"  
 They just tell of a heart's feelings  
 not just a story with a plot;  
 Three times I've now sent flowers  
 without a single word;  
 I'm beginning to wonder  
 if my flowers have been heard

**Thomas Arthur Shaffer**

**Nick Coble**

**Where Is My Child?**

Turn your head and look around  
 The sky is blue, the leaves are green.  
 Will we remember, will we know  
 as childhood slips from our minds?  
 The stars, the dreams, the hopes  
 of which our childhoods are based.  
 Where do we lose our childhoods?  
 Have our childhoods really disappeared,  
 or are the adults in us finally gone?

**Bryan Brown**



### The Little Fawn

When I woke this early dawn  
As I looked across the lawn  
I saw one lonely mother deer  
In search of her dear first born fawn.

For herself, she has no fear  
But for her child that's oh so dear  
She wanders near and far  
And becomes invisible from the distant clear.

And that night, I'd watched the stars  
And wondered where those poor deer are  
The snow begins to softly fall  
When I heard a distant cry.

Then I thought I heard it stall  
But I heard a quiet moan or call  
Now the little fawn is dead,  
As the mother still stands tall.

The fawn that the mother always fed,  
The only one she ever bred.  
But now the little one is dead,  
Now the little one is dead.

Bryan Brown

### A Lost Teammate

We all know death as a matter of life.  
But when it comes so sudden and young,  
The pain and sorrow cuts as if a knife.  
And no words purvey it from our tongue.

As I sit here, hands folded, on bent knees,  
I try to rationalize God's sudden move.  
How can He put this pain on you and me?  
A friend from me He did move.

And with the loss of friend and teammate  
One with whom you overcame adversity,  
You recall his energy and strength of late.  
And how he gave of himself, for the varsity.

But now for him, a new home crowd.  
They cheer and yell for his newest victory.  
Their voices ringing clear and loud.  
One of ours has returned to Thee.

Yes, the Angels of Heaven cheer for him,  
On his playing field, he stands alone.  
A good life and many smiles his win.  
They cheer because one of their own is home.

The body will go, as it began,  
But the memories and contacts never leave.  
Time will pass, as the hour glass sands,  
But his strength and friendship stays with me.

Written in memory of Blake Riley  
By Tim Baker, a "Lion at Heart"  
10/28/89

### A Leap of Faith

I climbed the mountain  
Capped with snow  
To view the valley  
Of dreams below  
Where only dreamers  
Are allowed to go  
When I heard an angel say to me  
"Here lies forth your destiny."

"Spread your wings!"  
The angel cried  
"Sail across  
The mountain side.  
Let faith be  
Your only guide  
As you sail to and fro  
Over land and sea below."

Now I will know  
Through darkest night  
That from sunset  
To dawning light  
I have raised  
My arms in flight  
Sailing in a sky of blue  
Off in search of something new.

Greg Hoover

### To J.D.M.

I am a child of the abyss  
and it's knowledge lives in me.  
For so long I remained in my home  
and lived a life you will never see.

My light was black lightning  
and the mute thunder was the only words.  
I learned to perform many miracles  
and so now I soar like the birds.

To no angels ever have I spoken.  
Their knowledge is of a different kind.  
I am the one to whom you will surrender,  
I am the Universal Mind.

Rain and shine...  
Moon of your sky...  
Absolute passion...  
Trained to defy...

I am the Lizard King  
I can do anything.

Martel Edward Tignor

### The Source

If you looked through my eyes  
Would you see something different?  
Excuses become reasons  
reasons, excuses  
Is total empathy possible?  
The delineation lies in understanding.  
Nothing is taken for granted  
Does that which is easily justified  
Need justification?  
Does making something not seem wrong  
Help the situation?  
Can wrong be right, or bad be good?  
Of course!  
Does the end justify the means?  
Consider the source.  
Amazing how bright the dark becomes  
Once to it one grows accustomed  
What is true  
personal perception  
a point of view  
constructive deception  
The vision becomes reality  
reality but a vision  
Turn on the light  
and fade from view

Curtis J. Steere



## an Ode to "My Gallery" (A. Brasfield)

I have been collected several times or more  
by others now before you  
and put within their store  
of memories of faces  
with minds that seldom match  
my grace has been inspected  
and put in the memories patch:  
But with each new collector  
I find less urgent call  
to be a part of their collection  
of memory faces on a wall;  
I only want to be part of a future,  
not part of a dreamy past;  
I, like you, want something perfect,  
why then do I finish last?

Thomas Arthur Shaffer

## Untitled

Stop the burning  
Of the books!  
Douse every coal you find

For you can have  
Your precious art  
If we can have your mind.

Greg Hoover



## Once More To The Lake, Part II

Charles Stephens

Hand in hand  
the other clutching rod and reel  
walk a man and a boy  
slowly down a steep hill  
on a narrow path  
that leads to the water's edge

Gently the man  
instructs the boy  
in the tying of the clinch knot  
The boy's chunky fingers  
firmly grasp the worm  
an offering to the whisker-fish

Later that day  
as the sun nears the horizon  
the man and boy  
return up the hill  
hand in hand  
the other clutching rod and reel

John L. Ford

## Unheard Words in Red

And the sky turned red with passion  
as we held to each others' hand.  
The waves crashed and released their wisdom to the air.  
Look upward and listen!  
Can you remember what it was like to hear,  
a symphony of roses cascading o'er head  
and the leaves of the roses crimsoned in dread?  
Can you remember the faces of the naked lovers?  
Did you see what I was saying when I said;  
"Take my love with you as all the others did."  
Bells rang that reaped miracles and people listened to them,  
can you begin to imagine what all was said?  
We were basking in emotion—it was everywhere  
and your face glistened in all of that red.  
If only you would have listened to exactly what I said.

Martel Edward Tignor

Attention

POETS

The American Poetry Association is currently having a poetry contest which is open to all.

First prize for the contest is \$500, while the grand prize offered is \$1,000. In total, 152 poets will win cash and publication prizes worth \$11,000.

Poets may enter the contest by sending up to six poems, each of no more than 20 lines in length, to

American Poetry Association  
Dept. CT-90  
250-A Polero St.  
P.O. Box 1803  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

Entries should be mailed by Dec. 31, with another contest beginning Jan. 1. It costs nothing to enter. Each poem is also considered for publication in the American Poetry Anthology a leading collection of today's poems.

During eight years of sponsorship, the American Poetry Association has held 34 contests and awarded \$165,000 in prizes to 3,100 winning poets.



## When She Left

The sky's laced with a beautiful grey,  
As the rain gently floats downwards.  
You turn to me as I begin to say  
That you're the love and joy of my life.

But you softly utter those words that still burn.  
It shocked me, as tears formed in my eyes.  
As I wept sorrowfully you quietly turned  
While you walked away, so did all future hopes.

It may seem childish and inconsiderate  
But when you left I went, too.  
You bring back memories of our wonderment  
Those times are now forever gone.

But I do carry on  
With days of joyous remembrance.  
Since you have left and quietly gone  
I have found a memory filled with love.

**Bryan Brown**

## His Father's Ghost

Long he watched his uncle's treason  
Searching hard for rhyme and reason  
For a clue to start the season  
The season of the dead's reply

Long he watched his unseen host  
Who calls himself his father's ghost  
But as Uncle Claudius would surely boast  
In a grave, six feet, did lie

And how he felt when he heard that mother  
Had married evil known as no other  
Except that of his father's murderous brother  
And here he sought revenge

"Turn to fight and I will face thee  
Turn to flee and I will race thee  
Turn to run and I will chase thee  
From this castle to Stonehenge!"

"Tis now the witching time of night"  
That Hamlet chose to start his fight  
To ruin wrong and make things right  
In the moonlit starry sky

So with all the strength his soul had left  
He gave his sword one mighty heft  
Into the false king's naked chest  
And all were left to die

**Greg Hoover**

**Charles Stephens**

## weep ever softly

who weeps for the babes whom God alone will claim?  
who weeps for the babes whose existence is pain?  
so weep ever softly, we are to blame.  
so weep ever softly, we bear the shame

who weeps as they suffer from their inherited high?  
who weeps as they utter forth their tortured cry?  
so weep ever softly for the last drawn sign.  
so weep ever softly for to be born is to die

who weeps when nothing done will suffice?  
who weeps when AIDS takes away life?  
so weep ever softly. so weep ever softly.  
so weep ever softly; AND THEY WILL ALL DIE!

**Christina Watkins**

